

**Brussels based eLearning regional network (BRENet)  
ICT eLearning Working Group Meeting  
16 May  
Scotland House**

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The main aim of the meeting was to develop structured networking opportunities in Brussels that will introduce practitioners to new contacts from elsewhere in Europe, with an interest in:

- Future learning technologies (including content sharing, learning platforms, open source tools to teach and learn) in relation to new pedagogical approaches and model (eLearning, mobile learning, TV learning, blended learning)
- Technologies for language learning.

We wanted to identify who else outside our group wants to join and works on practical idea, for practical projects before bringing practitioners from home latter in the year.

The meeting was attended by about 20 people coming from private companies and Brussels representation offices or e-learning networks that will be interesting partners for future projects on eLearning.

### **BRENet**

The network is composed of Brussels Regional Representations that are directly in touch with practitioners or regional intermediaries. It is an informal network supported by the European Association of Regional and Local Authorities for Lifelong Learning (EARLALL). The network has good relationship and cooperates with the Commission. We submitted a project to the Commission in 2005 to fund the network, which was refused since the Commission preferred to give priorities to projects involving practitioners. However, the Commission heard about the network and often agreed to speak at our events and is proud to support our activities.

The network work on different policy areas of importance to our regions/key stakeholders and gather European Intelligence. E-learning is an important area for us at policy level but also educationally and technologically.

e-Learning activities of the network:

- August 2003: EU eLearning Call for Proposals July-September 2003
- April 2004: Networking e-learning practitioners.  
More than 70 practitioners from around Europe came to Brussels to meet and find information about different funding programmes. 9 project ideas were developed that resulted in 3 applications.
- May 2006: Regional Dimension of the EU eLearning Agenda. The same kind of event as the previous one was reiterated with the help of the Committee of the Regions. It was a bigger market place bringing practitioners from the 11 regions of the network and from the 15 countries that are member of EARLALL together. Other projects were subsequently created.
- 2007: Partnership building for EU projects in e-Learning.

### **ICT Priorities**

ICT is a key factor for competitiveness and growth in all EU instruments. The main EU funding sources for eLearning as a tool for education and training can be found in the

Lifelong Learning Programme, the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme, FP7 and the Structural Funds. For more details, see the presentations attached.

## **Euan Mackenzie, 3Mrt**

<http://www.3mrt.com/>

He presented its company and its work. 3mrt is Scottish based a company with two subsidiaries in the USA and India, specialised in accelerate learning software products using games based technologies and software, Web 2.0 technologies and visual learning techniques. The software is designed to improve the retention of information and exam performance of its users.

3Mrt market is:

- lifelong learning;
- all stages of primary, secondary and tertiary education;
- corporate, industrial; and
- medical, legal and scientific.

The company has never done any EU project but is keen to develop partnerships in Europe and to develop new technologies and solutions within Europe.

He insisted on the importance of self learning and not only giving direction for learning to people. We should help people to attain what they want to achieve, to pass exam and not only focus on learning for learning.

## **Didier Vermeuren, Brabo ventures**

[www.braboventures.com](http://www.braboventures.com)

Brabo Ventures is a pan-European corporate advisory. For example, it helps SMEs through online assessment tool to assess their business plan. The toolbox is available for free on the internet. The company organised master class training around Europe to educate entrepreneurs on having a good business plan and to talk to investors.

It has been involved in different EU projects:

- Financing and entrepreneurship: Gate2Growth.
- Medical devices: Injection – Europe INNOVA.
- Energy: ProRETT – Europe INNOVA.
- Food Innovation: ENFI – Europe INNOVA.
- RTD: Bridge2Growth.

## **MENON Network EEIG**

<http://www.menon.org/>

MENON is a European innovation and research network providing information and advice to policy makers and authorities, education communities, and the ICT and media industry on issues related to innovation and changes in Education and Training, Lifelong Learning and Knowledge Society developments in Europe and worldwide.

The MENON Network is active both at national level, through its members, and at transnational level, where the EEIG coordinates co-funded projects, and is active in other collaboration and support work for the European Commission and international organisations.

Priorities:

- observation and analysis of e-Learning (projects HELIOS, DDELOS, POLE, LEONE);
- quality of e-Learning (projects SEQUEL, TRIANGLE, EFQUEL);
- skills and competencies in the Knowledge Society (TRACE, COMPETENT);
- societal learning;
- support to international cooperation; and
- e-Inclusion.

What they can do for the group would be to facilitate observation and reflection on eLearning. One of the main tools to fulfil this task is the e-Learning observatory HELIOS. HELIOS aims at responding to questions like: to what extent eLearning is an effective means to improve access to learning opportunities? or how much eLearning can help European citizens to achieve better employability? through continuous information collection, work analysis and by collecting the opinions of eLearning experts, practitioners and users across Europe. A report is published every year.

### **Anthony Fulgoni, Proxim Wireless**

<http://www.proxim.com/>

Proxim is a manufacturer of Broadband Wireless Systems for enterprises and service providers. It builds equipment, educates to technology and supports technology. It helped to deliver fast broadband link to schools in areas where it was impossible to use cables or where wireless was cheaper than cable. Having no access to broadband internet means more and more being excluded from the society. Therefore that type of system is a good way to improve social inclusion, especially for people living in remote areas.

### **Peter Elen, Questionmark, Company and Solution Overview**

<http://www.questionmark.com/us/index.aspx>

The company has offices in UK, Belgium and the US and has more than 2,500 customers in corporate, government and education markets. Questionmark creates computer based assessment management systems to create, deliver and report on assessments for exams, test, quizzes and surveys. The software are available in English, French, Spanish, German, French and Dutch but the content can then be in any other language. People create the content, and then the software creates the test and the report.

The main message conveyed by Peter Ellen was that they have 70 years of experience in the field and have a thorough knowledge of assessment systems and therefore they advice companies no to try to build their own systems but to use Questionmark's expertise.

### **Johan Van Oost, European Federation for Open and Distance Learning (EFODL) "E-learning through the European working world"**

<http://www.efodl.net/>

The federation is dedicated to the promotion of eLearning for vocational training and education, focussing as well on training institutions as on small and middle enterprise. It has worked in European projects in the past for example with a project call "Social and Sector-based eLearning enhanced by professional open distance learning networks" (S2net). Relying on their experience of the difficulty to bring SMEs to conferences on eLearning and to integrate eLearning in the world of work, the project created guidebooks to facilitate and support the work of open distance learning practitioners (for

example "eLearning getting started", "e-learning me included", and "10 steps to learner support") that can be downloaded free of charge on the internet.

It is currently working on different European projects

- "ELeanerEContent" is a project in the framework of the European EQUAL programme producing guidebooks like "From content to e-content" and "From learning towards e-learning".
- SEVAQ (Self Evaluation of Quality in e-Learning) is a project located within the framework of the Leonardo Da Vinci Programme. The aims of the project are to improve the quality of e-Learning experiences, development of multi-functional self-evaluation tool, to provide guide for improving quality, work with local target reference groups and dissemination on European level.

## **Conclusion:**

The present report will be circulated to the meeting attendees but also to the Member States research offices. Any comments or ideas are welcomed and we will take them into account in the next steps.

We will discuss with practitioners and previous working group on pedagogical issue and see what we can do in the next month.

At the end, a big market place will be organised during the last quarter of 2007 to foster partner searches, and to exchange practical ideas for potential projects' proposals.

P.S: all the presentations are available on our website <http://www.scotlandeuropa.com/PUBLIC%20SITE/News%26Events/news%26events.htm>